

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 27, 2005

Contact:

Anne Johnson, Director of Communications, (202) 523-3240, ext. 27

WASHINGTON - Commissioner Michael Cromartie will present the findings of the Commission's ***Policy Focus on Uzbekistan*** and recommendations for U.S. policy at a roundtable " **Human Rights and Instability in Uzbekistan** " at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on Friday, June 3, from 8:15-9:30 a.m. Commissioner Cromartie will be joined by Robert Templer, Director of the Asia Program at the International Crisis Group, who will present Crisis Group's just-released report, "Uzbekistan: the Andijon Uprising," on recent events in Uzbekistan. The meeting will be chaired by Dr. Martha Brill Olcott, Senior Associate at Carnegie.

In April 2005, the Commission recommended to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that the State Department designate Uzbekistan a "country of particular concern," or CPC, in accordance with the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act, due to its egregious, systematic, and ongoing violations of religious freedom. CPC designation carries with it the requirement that the U.S. government take specific policy actions, up to and including the cessation of economic and security assistance. *Policy Focus on Uzbekistan* includes a number of recommendations for U.S. policy. Many of those recommendations were formulated on the basis of a Commission trip to Uzbekistan in October 2004, when the Commission met with Uzbek government officials, human rights activists, religious leaders, and former prisoners in the Ferghana Valley, including in Andijon, as well as in Tashkent and Samarkand.

Uzbek government policies towards religious groups and individuals foreshadowed the violence in Andijon. The Commission has joined others in calling for an international investigation, possibly by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) which has an on-the-ground presence in Uzbekistan, to clarify the tragic course of events in Andijon.

What:□□□□□

When:

Where:

Carnegie Endowment roundtable with International Crisis Group

Friday, June 3, 8:15 - 9:30 a.m.

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

1779 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

Please RSVP by noon June 2 to Marina Barnett at (202)939-2283 or mbarnett@ceip.org

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to monitor the status of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief abroad, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related international instruments, and to give independent policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State and the Congress.

Preeta D. Bansal ,
- Felice D. Gaer ,